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Most British teachers say they lack training on climate change - poll

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Body

By Emma Batha

LONDON, March 16 (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Nearly three quarters of British teachers say they have not had enough training to educate students about climate change, the implications of global warming and how best to confront them, a poll showed on Tuesday.

Although 90% of teachers thought climate change education should be compulsory, 41% said it was rarely or never mentioned in their schools, according to a study by youth-led campaign group Teach the Future.

Seven in 10 teachers said they had not received adequate training on the topic.

In schools where children did learn about climate change, it was mostly limited to science and geography lessons, with only one in 20 teachers agreeing the issue was integral to many areas across the curriculum.

Teach the Future campaigner Dorothy Joddrell said education was failing to prepare young people for the future.

"Our lives will be significantly affected by climate change, and our education should therefore prepare us to adapt to the climate crisis, empower us to contribute to its solutions and enable us to achieve ***climate justice***," she said.

"To ensure all students can benefit from climate education, the government needs to make it a key part of the whole curriculum, not brush most of it aside to an optional subject."

The Department of Education was not immediately available to comment.

Teach the Future, which aims to improve education on climate change, was started by a group of secondary school students after the school climate strikes in 2019 led by Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg.

Education has been highlighted as a key plank in tackling climate change by the United Nations education body UNESCO amid warnings from scientists that world leaders are failing to take sufficient action to curb global warming.

But research by the National Union of Students in 2019 showed only 4% of school children in England felt they knew a lot about climate change.

The Teach the Future study included findings from two polls, one using a sample of 7,682 teachers and the other a sample of 503. (Reporting by Emma Batha //news.trust.org) !@COPYRIGHT=© 2021 Postmedia Network Inc. All rights reserved.

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